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## A Life of Service and An Easter Meditation

Grace Coburn Smith

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607



## *A Life of Service*

*The sweetest lives are those to service wed.*

— Browning

Service to others seems to have been the mainspring of action in the character of our friend, Mrs. Charles V. Hanson, whose peaceful home-going on Sunday afternoon, July 14th, at Mt. Vernon, N. Y., brought to a close a long and beautiful life.

Mrs. Hanson who was a Maine woman was always very loyal to her native state. She was born in Portland, February 7, 1844. Sarah Abby Libby spent a happy girlhood in the Forest City, where she went through the schools and was graduated from the Girls' High School. For several years in the school she was a successful teacher of Latin, a subject in which she always kept up her proficiency.

On July 13, 1868, she was married to Rev. Charles V. Hanson, also of Portland, who had interrupted his college course at Colby for service in the Christian Commission at Harpers Ferry, Virginia, during the Civil War.

Mr. Hanson's first pastorate after his graduation from Newton was in Peabody, Mass., where his bride soon won the affection of all around her. After eleven years they returned to Maine, making their home in Damariscotta for the next eight years.

In the fall of 1887 the Hansons moved to Skowhegan, where Dr. Hanson became the first pastor of the Bethany Baptist Church. During his pastorate of eleven years the church grew largely in numbers and the present church edifice was built.

Mrs. Hanson was known as a devoted and successful minister's wife in "Bethany Home." She was president of the Women's Missionary Society, teacher of the young women's Bible class in the Sunday school, a constant attendant at all the church services, and she visited much in the homes. She was deeply beloved, not only in the church, but in the town, where her rare sweetness of character and many gifts won her a large circle of friends. She contributed many literary papers to the Skowhegan Woman's Club, of which she served at one time as president. She was active in the work of the W. C. T. U. and other good causes, and was a Charter Member of Eunice Farnsworth Chapter, D. A. R., in which she always retained her membership.

Mrs. Hanson was the mother of three children. The oldest was a little boy, George, who died in early childhood. Her daughter, Edith, and son, Harold, grew up in our town, where they both graduated from the high school in preparation for Colby College, of which their father was a trustee.

On account of failing health Dr. Hanson resigned his pastorate in Skowhegan in the summer of 1898, and he and his wife spent the following winter in the South. During the weary months of a long illness, Mrs. Hanson gave to her husband care which was characteristically loving and skillful. The end came on November 11, 1899, in Atlantic, Mass. The deep affection in which Dr. Hanson was held was shown at an impressive memorial service in Bethany Church and later by the erection in the church of a beautiful tablet in his memory.

After the death of her husband Mrs. Hanson lived for many years with her daughter, Mrs. Herbert L. Gale, and her family in Medford, Mass. She was a most devoted grandmother to Mrs. Gale's three children, to whom she was ever a dearly loved companion and also a helper in their studies, especially when they came to reading Latin. Thus her constant association with young people kept her young in mind, heart and sympathies.

The past four years she made her home with her son, Rev. Harold L. Hanson, pastor for many years at the Charleston Baptist Church in Boston, who has recently gone with his wife to a new field of work in Claremont, N. H.

From here extended visits were made in the homes of Mrs. Gale's daughters, Laura, who is Mrs. Walter R. Guthrie of Ludlow, Mass., and Hilda, wife of Rev. John W. Bush, of New Haven, Conn.

The first of the summer, Mrs. Hanson went to be with her daughter, Mrs. Gale, who was passing some months in Mt. Vernon, N. Y., making a home for her son, Charles Hanson Gale, a member of the editorial staff of "Aviation," with office in New York City.

Up to recent years, Mrs. Hanson led a wonderfully active and helpful life, interested in the work of church and home, an exquisite needle woman and a very great reader on a variety of subjects. She was the center of an unusual family affection on the part of children, grandchildren and her little great grandson at Ludlow and was loved and cherished by a large circle of personal friends.

To grow old beautifully is an art as well as a grace. To be able to live patiently for many months in the shadows until the light shone again, to accept with cheerfulness the limita-



tions of age while keeping up an active interest in all that was going on around her, to continue to be a bulwark and tower of strength to her family even after the frailty of years had descended upon her, these are some of the marks of the triumphant spirit which burned within her like a "lamp seen through alabaster" and made her life an inspiration to all who knew her.

*"In the city of many mansions,  
Where Christ hath gone before,  
Where is no night, for God is light,  
She dwelleth evermore.*

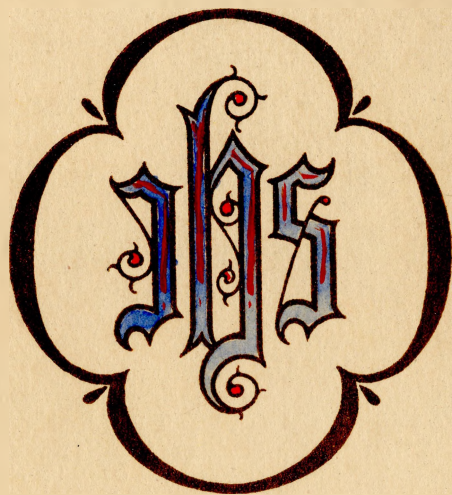
*"The nations to Emanuel  
Their hymn of glory sing,  
And night and day they serve alway  
Who stand before the King."*

GRACE COBURN SMITH

Skowhegan, Maine,  
July, 1929.



Pamp  
607





AN EASTER  
MEDITATION

BY  
GRACE COBURN SMITH



Washington  
Written in 1928  
Printed in 1931

*Grace Coburn Smith died  
March - 1931*

## I. H. S.

### Prologus—Et Feminarum

- I. Adventus Triumphalis
  - II. Coena Ultima
  - III. Vigiliae
  - IV. Ecce Homo
  - V. Via Crucis
  - VI. Mater Dolorosa
  - VII. Resurrexit Sicut Dixit
- Epilogus—Resurgam



## PROLOGUS—ET FEMINARUM

Who pillowed on her breast His baby head  
And kissed Him when she laid Him on His bed?

What aunt or cousin helped Him at His play  
And watched Him grow in stature day by day?

Who broke the alabaster box and said,  
“Dear Lord, let me anoint Thy blessed head!”

Who cooked the dinner for her Guest to eat?  
Who sat in loving rapture at His feet?

Who from the Cross were last to go away?  
Who were the first to greet Him Easter Day?

All women. How they loved Him, and they poured  
Their hearts' oblation out for their adored!

Saviour of men was Jesus, and how true,  
If we may understand—and *women* too!

## I. ADVENTUS TRIUMPHALIS

*Then Jesus six days before the passover  
came to Bethany.*

*John 12: 1*

*When they heard that Jesus was coming  
to Jerusalem, they took branches of palm  
trees and went forth to meet him and cried,  
Hosanna! Blessed is the King of Israel that  
cometh in the name of the Lord.*

*John 12: 12-13*

## ADVENTUS TRIUMPHALIS

O Mary, it is hard, so hard  
To see Him ride away!  
Dear Martha, let us trust that God  
Will keep Him, as we pray.

O Mary, see the crowds, the crowds  
That throng Him on all sides!  
Look, Martha, they are waving palms;  
He rides as a King rides!

Hark, Mary, to the shouts, the shouts—  
The words I cannot hear!  
O Martha, they are words of praise,  
They sing Hosannas, dear.

Will He come back to us tonight?  
Come back and sup with us?  
Yes, Martha, He will come, I think,  
With Brother Lazarus.



## II. COENA ULTIMA

*And he shall show you a large upper  
room. There make ready.*

*Luke 22:12*

*And as they did eat, Jesus took bread,  
and blessed, and brake it, \* \* \* And He took  
the cup, and when He had given thanks, He  
gave it to them, and they all drank of it.*

*Mark 14:22-23*

*And when they had sung a hymn they  
went out into the Mount of Olives.*

*Matt. 26:30*

## COENA ULTIMA

The Master eats tonight the Paschal Supper  
With His friends;  
Yes, in our upper room.  
What honor on our house descends!

He asked me for a bowl of water  
And for a towel too.  
What will He do with them, I wonder—  
Wash His hands when supper's through?

I've been busy getting ready;  
Made my bread of finest wheat,  
White and snowy; and the wine,  
So freshly vinted, for his use, I hope, is meet.

Hark, the noise! It was Iscariot  
Going out the door—  
Probably to do some errand  
Or give money to the poor.

How clear the Master's voice!  
He's talking—now He starts to pray.  
Well, at last I hear them singing.  
Good-by, neighbor, call some other day.



### III. VIGILIAE

*And they came to a place which was  
named Gethsemane; and He saith to His  
disciples, Sit ye here while I shall pray.*

*Mark 14:32*

*And Peter said unto Him, Lord, \* \* \*  
I will lay down my life for Thy sake.*

*John 13:37*

*And Jesus saith unto Him, \* \* \* before  
the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.*

*Mark 14:30*

### VIGILIAE

I cannot sleep—  
I toss upon my bed,  
Some great dread  
Holds my heart.  
My Peter, is he dead?  
It cannot be,  
I know, but where is he?  
Does any sorrow hover o'er the little band  
Of Jesus' loved disciples?  
I cannot understand  
Why Peter comes not back to me!

He said he'd be away  
A longer time today—  
To eat the Paschal Supper  
In some small upper  
Chamber by the Gate;  
That I was not to wait—  
He feared he might be late.

Sometimes at close of day  
The Master goes to pray  
On Olivet, in an old Garden there;  
It's called Gethsemane.  
I wonder, could it be  
That Peter went to watch with Him in prayer?

O Peter, why so late?  
I wait, I wait, I wait!  
One thing I surely know:  
Where Jesus went he'd go  
If any danger came.  
He'd die for His dear name!  
He's often made this claim—  
Not twice nor thrice,  
But every day the same.  
O Peter, I have watched all night,  
And now, my love, it's almost light,  
And the cock—crows—twice!



#### IV. ECCE HOMO

*And when they had bound Him, they led Him away, and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor.*

*Matt. 27:2*

*His wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man; for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of Him.*

*Matt. 27:19*

#### ECCE HOMO

O Pontius, my beloved—  
Pontius, Pontius dear,  
Pontius, Lord of love,  
Pontius—dear Pontius—hear  
Your wife, your wife.  
I've had a dream—  
O spare, spare, spare the life  
Of this Just One! O do not seem  
To be the tool of cruelty and strife!  
O save, save, save, redeem  
This pure and spotless, sinless life!  
Of all my treasure take  
Whate'er you will—but make  
This poor young Prisoner free;  
Do it, I beg, for my sweet sake,  
For me, for me!

\* \* \* \* \*

*Behold the Man!* the Roman said,  
Pressed deep the thorns—upon His head.



## V. VIA CRUCIS

*And He bearing His cross went forth  
into a place called Golgotha.*

*John 19:17*

*And there followed Him a great com-  
pany of people, and of women, which also  
bewailed and lamented Him.*

*Luke 23:27*

## VIA CRUCIS

The Way of Sorrows—  
Oh those precious feet  
That carried Him through Galilee  
In the heat,  
Always to heal and bless!  
O God, that they must press  
The cruel stones of the Jerusalem street!  
My heart cries out! What can I do, O say,  
For Him—this last sad day?

O Master, Master dear,  
Canst Thou not hear?  
This kerchief—take it, take it now  
To wipe the beads of sweat from Thy dear brow!  
It is Veronica asks it! Take it, I pray,  
This little gift of love from me today,  
As Thou dost bear Thy Cross  
Along this cruel Way.

## VI. MATER DOLOROSA

*Now there stood by the cross of Jesus  
His Mother.*

*John 19:25*

*When Jesus therefore saw His mother,  
and the disciple standing by, whom He loved,  
\* \* \* He saith to the disciple, Behold thy  
Mother! And from that hour the disciple  
took her unto his own home.*

*John 19:26-27*

## MATER DOLOROSA

The tears—they start—  
The tears they will not fall.  
Oh—my heart—my heart—  
My Son—my all!

The little Child I bore—  
The Child I nursed—  
Oh, must I see Him sore  
Despised and cursed?

Dearest of little boys!  
The shavings on the floor  
Were all He had for toys—  
He never asked for more.

He took His father's place—  
He was my strong right arm!  
O God, hide not Thy face—  
O save—my Boy—from harm!

He is my all—my all—  
Whom can I lean upon?  
Oh—I faint—I fall.  
Give me—your arm—John!

## VII. RESURREXIT SICUT DIXIT

*The first day of the week cometh Mary  
Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto  
the sepulchre.*

*John 20:1*

*Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned  
herself and saith unto Him, Rabboni.*

*John 20:16*

*He is not here; for He is risen, as He  
said.*

*Matt. 28:6*

## RESURREXIT SICUT DIXIT

My Lord, my Lord—  
They've taken Him, away!  
Tell me, kind Gardener—speak and say  
Where they have laid Him.  
The sun  
Is scarcely up,  
And I have run  
From the Holy City  
All the way  
To bring the spices.

Mary!  
What voice is that I hear?  
Mary!  
O Master, Master, Master dear!  
It is His voice;  
Rejoice, my soul, rejoice, rejoice!  
Oh, that I had ointment sweet  
To anoint those blessed feet!  
In love and awe I bow my head,  
For He is risen—risen—risen—  
As He said!



EPILOGUS—RESURGAM

As out of the depth of the earth  
Springs the lily to new birth ;

As out of the gray cocoon  
A butterfly flutters soon ;

So my soul shall rise to Thee,  
Dear God, who gave it me.